

<http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/News/PoliticsNation/India-slams-US-bodys-criticism-on-religious-freedom/articleshow/4891280.cms>

Prakash was referring to the decision of the **US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF)** to place India on its 'watch list' due to 'disturbing increase' in communal violence against religious minorities in the country.

In a statement in Washington Wednesday, the **USCIRF** said India earned the 'watch list' designation due to the 'disturbing increase' in communal violence against religious minorities - specifically Christians in Orissa in 2008 and Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 - and the largely inadequate response from the Indian government to protect the rights of religious minorities.

A country designated on the **USCIRF** 'watch list' requires 'close monitoring due to the nature and extent of violations of religious freedom engaged in or tolerated by the government'.